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# MEXICO

*by*

**JOSEPH WHARTON**



PRIVATELY PRINTED

*Christmas*

1902



# MEXICO

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**MEXICO**

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**MEXICO**

I

Wilt thou have respite from this modern life  
That wastes thy soul in trade's or fashion's strife?  
Wilt thou cast off dull toil and paltry care,  
In Nature's free magnificence to share?  
Lov'st thou the tales of old, romantic times,  
Of wild adventures in luxurious climes?  
And soars thy eager fancy far away,  
To reach some tropic Eden or Cathay,  
Where thou in sunny happiness may'st range  
'Mid scenes and peoples picturesquely strange?  
Fond dreamer, pining thus, why hunger so?  
Before thee lies mysterious Mexico.



LA VIGA CANAL AND CUSTOM-HOUSE



TROPICAL SCENERY, PROGRESO, YUCATAN

## II

Vast, sun-dried table-lands, where dust-whirls rise  
Like phantom serpents struggling to the skies ;  
Huge, barren mountains veined with precious ore,  
Rich for past centuries, rich for ages more ;  
Broad, placid lakes where wildfowl feed and splash,  
Superb ravines where plunging torrents dash,  
Imperial peaks with gleaming snow-crest crowned,  
The beacons of a hundred miles around ;  
Large, fertile regions stretching warm and wide  
To meet the ocean bounds on either side ;  
Grandeur and loveliness in endless show ;  
Delicious air. All this is Mexico.



VALLEY OF PUEBLA, CHOLULA, FROM THE TOP OF THE  
AZTEC PYRAMID



RUINS AT ALVARADO

### III

Pines on the mountain, palms upon the plain,  
Abounding wealth of coffee, corn, and cane,  
Cactus and yucca of quaint prickly forms,  
Armed at all points, unheeding foes or storms ;  
Maguéy, whose serried ranks fill many a field,  
That fiery mescal and smooth pulqué yield ;  
Gay birds and insects, countless fruits and flowers,  
Bull-fights profaning the sweet Sabbath hours ;  
Ploughs made of wood, that feebly scratch the ground,  
Wheat threshed on dirt by oxen trampling round ;  
Tortillas and frijolés. He will grow  
Acquaint with these who visits Mexico.



STREET VIEW, CORDOVA, SHOWING PEAK OF ORIZABA



BULL FIGHT—ENTRANCE OF THE FIGHTERS

## IV

White towns and cities that recall old Spain,  
As if the Moor and Cid were come again,  
By stony roads approached on every side,  
Where mule trains toil and caballeros ride ;  
Tall stone cathedrals, huts of reeds and clay,  
Like priests that rule 'mid humble folk that pay ;  
A crude republic, rogues and patriots blent  
With the great mass to both indifferent.  
The soldier patient, rascally, and brave,  
The peasant abject, but not quite a slave :  
A furtive race, dark, superstitious, slow,  
Skilled in old arts, is that of Mexico.



THE CATHEDRAL, CITY OF MEXICO



A NATIVE HUT BY THE WAY-SIDE, CORDOVA

V

Out from the towns, with their commingled strain  
Of Spanish blood, these native men remain  
The Indian tribes Hernando Cortés met,  
Their ancient languages not perished yet,  
Nor dim observance of old heathen rite,  
Nor savage passion, deadly quick in fight ;  
Yet kindly aid to stranger guest is given,  
And Mary trusted as the Queen of Heaven.  
Knowing and having little, but content,  
In daily toil their simple lives are spent.  
A base content is this the gods bestow ;  
Meanly to live in glorious Mexico.



FARMER BOYS, ORIZABA



INDIAN BOYS, TOLUCA

## VI

For, when in Mexico's barbaric day  
Fierce king and host met king in bloody fray ;  
When captives, to the war-gods' temples led,  
Were butchered by the priests, who on them fed,  
Their grim idolatry's abhorrent blight  
Blinded all eyes to reason's cheerful light ;  
And when the conquering Spanish bigots came,  
Little recked they of mercy or of shame.  
Ground by such cruel centuries of wrong,  
What race was ever frankly true or strong ?  
This race, outlasting king and priest and foe,  
Abides and waits, possessing Mexico.



NATIVES PLOUGHING WITH OXEN, LEON



CHURCH BUILT BY CORTÉS, CHOLULA

## VII

Historic splendors have they of their own.  
See the great Montezuma fill their throne,  
Ruling, except small Tlaxcala, all the land  
With the stern mastery of supreme command.  
His foes subjected, and as vassals tied,  
Empire and tribute his on every side,  
From north to south, from coast to high plateau,  
His will is law, his swift-foot runners go.  
What though strange lords their race in bondage held  
In after days! Were not those lords expelled?  
Well may their past inspire a patriot glow  
Of hope and faith for future Mexico.



AQUEDUCT OF THE CURE, ATOTO



AVENUE DEL ORIENT, CITY OF MEXICO

## VIII

Meanwhile a deep and true content is theirs,  
One that their highest with the humblest shares ;  
The sweet repose of home, the ties of kin,  
With all the bliss that faithful love can win.  
Does vice offend ; what land from vice is clean ?  
No tongue defends it, for no plea can screen.  
But see the countless homes where virtue reigns,  
Where fond affection binds with silken chains ;  
Parents with children linked in sweet accord,  
Friend true to friend, and spouse by spouse adored.  
What purer happiness dwells here below,  
Than in the sacred homes of Mexico ?



ZACATECAS



NATIVE HUTS, JUANACATLÁN

## IX

And lo ! A tint of dawn is in the sky,  
That tells of fateful changes drawing nigh ;  
For even here the modern impulse stirs,  
And here the truth has honest worshippers.  
Not vainly does the nation's spirit wake,  
Resolved a nobler course henceforth to take,  
To share the great world's progress, and to stand  
Erect beside our friendly neighboring land.  
These men, who twice have burst their alien chain,  
Must solve the easier problems that remain.  
What affluent wealth and glory may they know,  
When they are men to match their Mexico !



THE VALLEY OF MALTRADA



THE TERRACE, CASTLE OF CHAPULTEPEC

## X

Need they a friendly ruler by their side,  
The law's strong champion and his country's pride ;  
A chief courageous, temperate, and just,  
On whom their hearts may lean with loyal trust ;  
One who will show them how in every land,  
Nature's crude hoards yield to the skilful hand,  
And how, with equal rights, each opening mind  
May all the roads to power and increase find ?

As rose our Washington, serenely great,  
And patient Lincoln, saviour of the State ;  
Their native Juarez laid the usurper low,  
Their Diaz guards and guides their Mexico.



BENITO JUAREZ  
First President of Mexico



PORFIRIO DIAZ  
President of Mexico

## XI

Oh, land majestic! Apt for all delight,  
Sweet womanly languors, and high deeds of man.  
Lie prone no more beneath the palsyng ban  
Of crusted usage! On thy valleys dight  
With tropic verdure, thy cold mountains' height,  
And blissful slopes which temperate breezes fan.  
Breathes the new air that through the ages ran  
Whenever God turned men toward the light.  
Does our proud race alone enjoy the sun,  
Or does the rain make green no fields but ours?  
Prophetic eyes but faintly have begun  
To see the lofty climax of thy powers.  
When the full noontide of thy day is won,  
And gathering night on weary Europe lowers.

JOSEPH WHARTON

PHILADELPHIA, May, 1891



FALLS OF JUANACATLAN



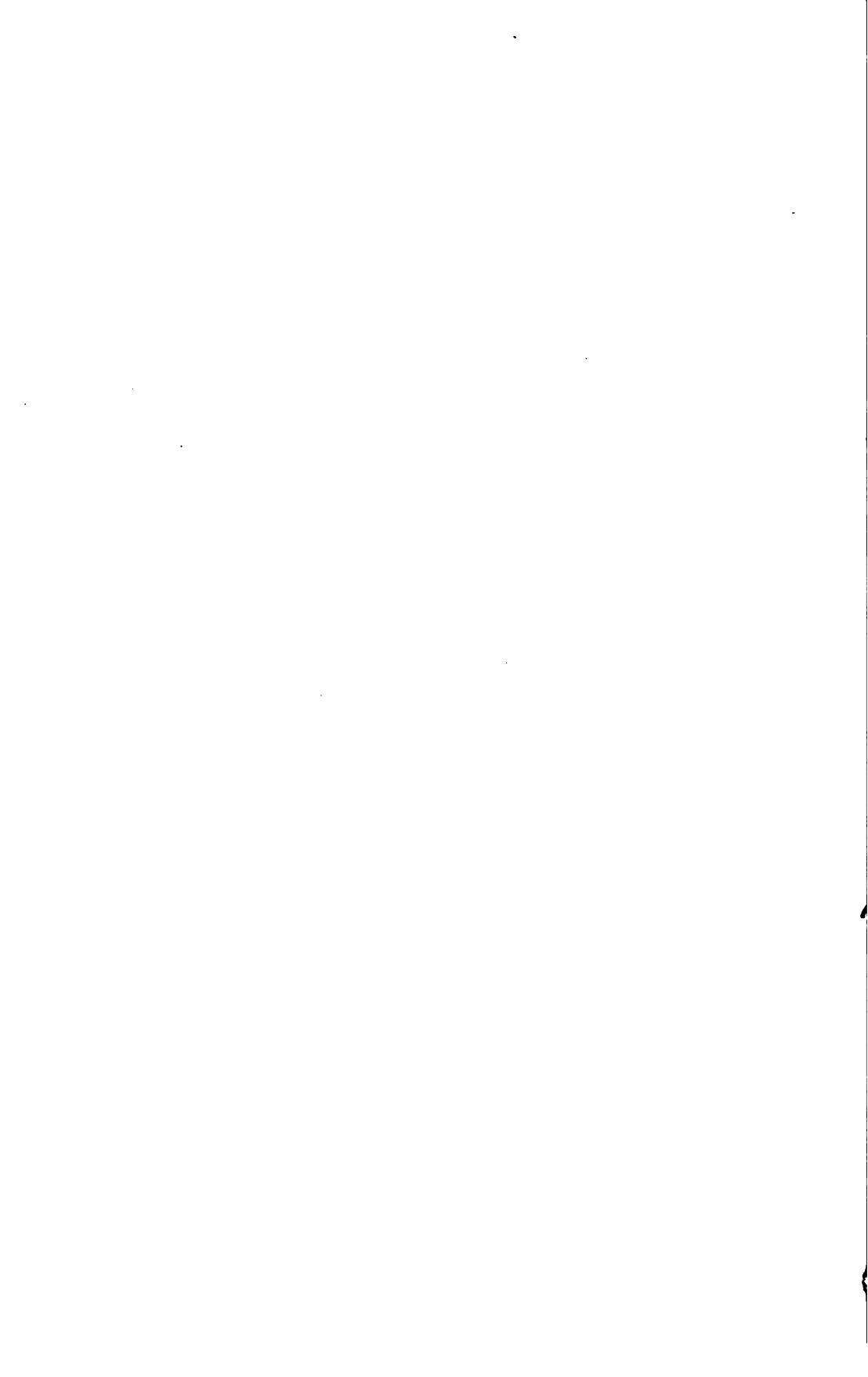
VIEW OF PUEBLA, SHOWING MOUNT POPOCATEPETL



HUITZILOPOSTLI, AZTEC GOD OF WAR



STATUE OF QUAUHTEMOC, CITY OF MEXICO







# POSEIDON IN AMERICA

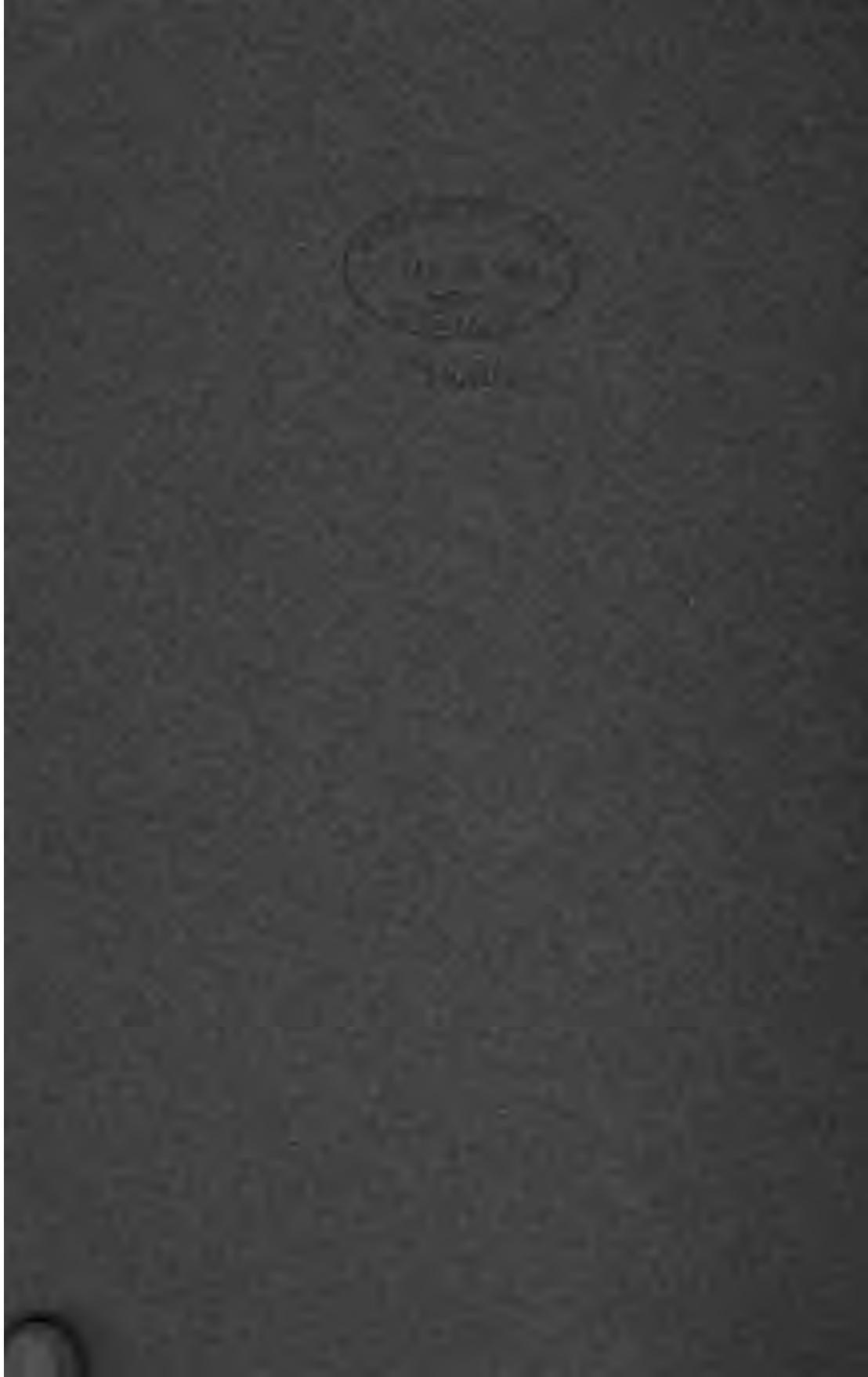
BY

JOSEPH WHARTON



PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION

1900







OLD STYLE.  
Seeking mastery at sea by worship of Poseidon.

TO THE GENTLE READERS  
OF  
“POSEIDON IN AMERICA.”

---

Each well-instructed youth has heard of Greece's god Poseidon,  
Who used to rule the briny seas our modern vessels ride on;  
An ancient, beardy, crusty chap, who held a three-tined pitchfork,  
While bobbing round the waves much like an animated fish-cork.  
And all have lived these many years quite fixedly supposing  
This duffer to be dead and gone, when here he rises prosing  
To tell what company he kept, and how he spoke and acted,  
In days long past—a history with vanity compacted.  
You'd think Pos. never did a thing but what was grand and dignified,  
In those old days when he was young, before his joints were dignified,  
Nor pride himself receiving what he calls, I think, oblations,  
When people travelling by sea threw unto him their rations.  
I wrote down all his yarn of gods and other things chimerical,  
Till he began to prophesy and grow a bit hysterical.  
And though such ghost-talk makes me tired and brings a sort of creepiness,  
I never gave a single yawn, nor showed a sign of sleepiness.  
We fondly hope (that's Pos. and I), but yet with due humility,  
That you who read his monologue will show a like civility.

JOSEPH WHARTON.



## POSEIDON IN AMERICA.

---

Who mocks me thus !—“ Poseidon’s but a name,  
A myth outgrown, a fable old and dead  
Of the rude sea-god, who, by vulgar fame,  
Made the earth tremble with his thunderous tread.”

Should this vain scoffer come beneath my hand,  
He soon may learn how weak I am from age,  
When he, unnerved, strives feebly to withstand  
My strong seduction or my fatal rage.

For many such, through the long centuries’ lapse,  
Have I seen swoln with pride before their fall;  
Flushed with small triumphs, shattered with mishaps,  
They came, they perished, I surviving all.

And I remain unchanged, nor is my reign  
More narrow now than in that ancient day  
When stern Alcides at the gate of Spain  
With Abyla and Calpe barred my way.

Looking far backward: lo ! I see again,  
Through the dim distance and the gathering gloom,  
Heroic shapes of gods and god-like men  
That lived since the huge Titans met their doom.

## POSEIDON IN AMERICA.

Zeus the superb, incomparably strong,  
 The prudent Hermes, Hera's jealous eyes,  
 Chaste Artemis, bright Phœbus rich in song,  
 Fierce restless Ares, Pallas calm and wise.

Anadyomene, bewildering fair,  
 Gleams in the sun, just risen from the brine.  
 Hephaestus plunges through the summer air,  
 And Dionysos gives to man the vine.

I see Prometheus bound, the vultures' prey,  
 Pluto the glow of open heaven-light shuns,  
 Rash Phaethon flings from the car of day,  
 Perseus to kill the dread Medusa runs.

Across my realm sails Theseus into Crete,  
 There meets the victor's and the lover's bliss;  
 Yet death's false signal on the returning fleet  
 Hurls grieving Ægeus down to my abyss.

Helen, than Aphrodite scarce less fair,  
 But false as fair, flies o'er me from her home,  
 The vows of Hellas unabashed to dare,  
 To ruin Priam's proud paternal dome.

Æneas on my waves escapes from Troy  
 To Carthage comes, in Italy they stay—  
 He, and great Julius' ancestor, his boy,  
 I bear them on and bless them on their way.

Not so strong Odysseus, the faithless Greek  
 Whose wiles broke down my Troy's well-buillded wall;  
 Vainly for help or pardon does he seek,  
 When I hear blinded Polyphemus call.

For him I scourge, and let Olympus see,  
With all his smooth-limbed gods, that from my wrath  
Not Zeus nor Pallas could, unquestioned, free  
Him who had braved me and dared cross my path.

Osiris, Isis, who in Egypt reigned,  
Saw my broad breast upheaving ships like chaff;  
But fled far inland when I them disdained,  
With buffeting salt wind and stormy laugh.

All these I knew; am I then but a shade,  
Naught but a figment of man's subtle mind?  
Is my great race by man to be betrayed,—  
Must old gods die that the new gods may find?

Like that hard god whom sad-eyed Jonah knew,  
When, crushed beneath the prophecy he bore,  
His comrades tossed him out from human view  
To the great fish that cast him on the shore.

A king of strange, fierce men, whose jealous god  
Foreboded ill to our Olympian race—  
Mysterious Solomon—my strand has trod,  
Through all the world his tribe have left their trace.

Sidon and Tyre for ages sat supreme  
In wealth and grandeur on my eastern verge;  
Now, vanished like the memory of a dream  
Wealth, ships, and power. My billows sang their dirge.

Proud Persian Xerxes thought to bind me fast;  
Me, the untamed, to bind me with a chain  
That, as my master, on the sea he cast.  
But Salamis avenged his insult's stain.

Xenophon came, long marching wearily,  
 Marching and fighting through a hostile land.  
 Thalassa! cried his host with sudden glee,  
 When from a height they saw my friendly strand.

Phœnician Carthage, turbulent and free,  
 Dared strive with Greece and the young giant Rome  
 For mastery of my coasts and mid-world sea,  
 Till Carthage sank as sinks my cresting foam.

Great Alexander, in youth's glorious hour,  
 Passed me to conquer Asia's hapless kings.  
 Hapless he, too, when, drunk with boundless power,  
 He perished, master of all earthly things.

In Calaurea's isle beside by fane,  
 His refuge from the Macedonian's hate,  
 By his own hand Demosthenes lay slain ;  
 After long war his fear at last too great.

Pompey, and Antony, and Cæsar came,  
 And Cleopatra, fled from Actium's fight;  
 These, too, are gone, yet I am still the same,  
 No years oppress me and no sorrows blight.

When Paul stood forth I, wondering, dimly knew  
 A mild tremendous power till then unknown.  
 Shipwreck, nor serpent, nor fanatic Jew,  
 Hurt him round whom that sacred guard was thrown.

Amazing laws do Paul's grave followers teach !  
 For me to comprehend they come too late.  
 Not Zeus' stern power nor Ares' wrath they preach,  
 But, " Love your foes, do good to them that hate ! "

## POSEIDON IN AMERICA.

7

The Roman-Christian Constantine appeared,  
A host of bishops wrangling in his train.  
Whether one single god those rustics feared,  
Or two, or three, to me was far from plain.

Later, by me, Mohammed's hungry hordes  
To Europe swarmed, a cloud of fire and steel.  
Almost were they all Europe's conquering lords,  
Crushed back at last beneath the Spaniard's heel.

From the cold North came Vikings swooping down,  
Fierce hawks amid the throng of tamer fowl;  
Along my coast, in castle, field, and town,  
They struck, unsparing helmet, coif, or cowl.

Richard of England hither raged anon.  
The lion-heart, with many a knight and priest,  
To win Jerusalem went storming on.  
Going the greatest, he returned the least.

Trusting his oracles, as Jason did,  
And trusting me who love a manly soul,  
Columbus sailed for lands in mystery hid.  
I carried him to his far distant goal.

Spain's, Rome's armada, like a dragon vast,  
Crawled, charged with venom, 'gainst my England's shore.  
Her braggart strength on Ireland's rocks I cast.  
Proud king and cruel priest affront no more.

Still newer wars and heroes have I seen;  
Lepanto, Trafalgar, Navarino, Nile,  
And many a battle on my breast serene  
Where hosts were slain, the noble with the vile.

Monarchy and galley slave, Venetian, Turk—  
 All lived while my strong breath imparted life,  
 Soldier and pirate did their desperate work,  
 Nor cared I who was victor in the strife.

Nay, I am still Poseidon; my domains  
 Alcides' pillars now, nor Gades bound;  
 Ultima Thule me no more restrains,  
 Nor broad Atlantis which my flood has drowned.

All seas are mine, from East to furthest West.  
 Where Greece's earth-born gods were never known  
 I undivided rule. Each billowy crest  
 Serves me alike for chariot and for throne.

Advancing thus toward the sun's retreat,  
 Where he sinks down behind my utmost waves,  
 What mighty engines do I pass and meet?  
 Huge dead machines, of cunning man the slaves.

Bulky and fleet. Atropos not more fixed,  
 Never to swerve from their pre-ordered way;  
 Yet these I toss till sea and sky are mixed.  
 Hephaestus' pupils own Poseidon's sway.

Unto this smooth and silver-shining sand,  
 At last I come; a wide resounding shore,  
 The margin of a fruitful, prosperous land,  
 Where Ceres dwells—Demeter called of yore.

Here yellow harvests inland valleys grace,  
 Such as in Enna once were her delight,  
 When amorous Pluto stole from her embrace  
 The fair Persephone to his realm of night.

But how for me can this broad land be fair  
Whose people render me no homage true,  
Nor know me by my name, nor greatly care  
For any good or glory save the new?

Why should I leave my warm *Æ*gean Sea,  
Like a male sapphire glittering in the sun,  
For this cold beryl wave surrounding me;  
This land where jocund happiness is none?

These care-worn moderns know no luscious joys  
Such as the servants of the old gods owned.  
Faith and devotion are their cast-off toys;  
No fault is now by sacrifice atoned.

My old-time terrors, nor my favoring smile,  
Here bring me worshippers; to me no shrine  
Is raised, as erst on every Grecian isle;  
For me no priest slays bullock, none pours wine.

Strange melancholy seizes me, for now,  
Supreme no more, an influence I feel,  
To which as vassal-monarch I must bow,  
Yet will not to my prayer itself reveal.

Far more majestic than my brother Zeus,  
Liker that Jahveh whom the Jews obeyed,  
More mild, more wise, whose hand no power can loose,  
Is this I follow secretly dismayed.

None follows me. None sees Zeus' awful nod,—  
Dryad and Nereid, Dionysos, Pan,  
None meets, for none has faith to see a god.  
Lost are we all to unperceiving man.

No more, no more returns the cheerful time  
 When Pan, with his smooth nymphs, the forest glades  
 Threaded, in noonday heat or morning prime,  
 Like deer at home within their leafy shades.

Yet am I still Poseidon, unto whom  
 Flow all the streams, nay also all the earth.  
 All sinks into the sea's unsated tomb,  
 From it to rise again in various birth.

My easier mysteries man may partly guess.  
 What knows he of the dire abyss below,  
 Which no wind stirs nor sun's warm beams caress,  
 Where hideous dragons wander to and fro ?

Poseidon old indeed ! yea, none so old ;  
 Still am I lusty young ; yea, none so young.  
 Gentler than Zephyros, more than lien bold,  
 Stronger than sage e'er thought or poet sung.

But still more ancient, still more young and strong,  
 That awful power I feel, high over mine,  
 To which both earth and spirit must belong,  
 Which, all-creating, rules with sway benign.

His wisdom, love, and power it seems transcend  
 All that my utmost vision can attain.  
 His rule shows no beginning and no end.  
 My weary thought grasps after him in vain.

In vain I search. He is not of my race  
 That filled the ancient world with glorious life.  
 Is this a new-born god that would displace  
 Our calm Olympus for a world of strife ?

And is this god immortal more than I,  
Or shall he be forgot like Zeus and me,  
Like Wodan, master of the northern sky,  
And Baal, once Lord along my eastern sea ?

Is change the law ? Must all things change or die ?  
Must even the gods themselves take other forms ?  
Then let me seek my future to descry,  
Though dark with changes and impending storms.

Its faint-lit secrets I explore. Behold !  
With deep content, as the dim ages clear,  
I see the people's destiny unrolled,  
Whose strong magnetic spirit drew me here.

Viking and Teuton ; Latin, Kelt, and Scot,—  
Each conquering race that on the ocean ruled,—  
No power diminished and no art forgot,  
Here blend to one, by toil and conflict schooled.

Inured and trained by me, by me embraced,  
ME they adore and cherish, not my name.  
My strength they covet, my approval taste ;  
Poseidon, Neptune, Sea-Power, are the same.

Hephæstus' power and skill with me combine  
To give them mastery on every sea.  
His stubborn steel and my unstable brine,  
Alike subservient to their will shall be.

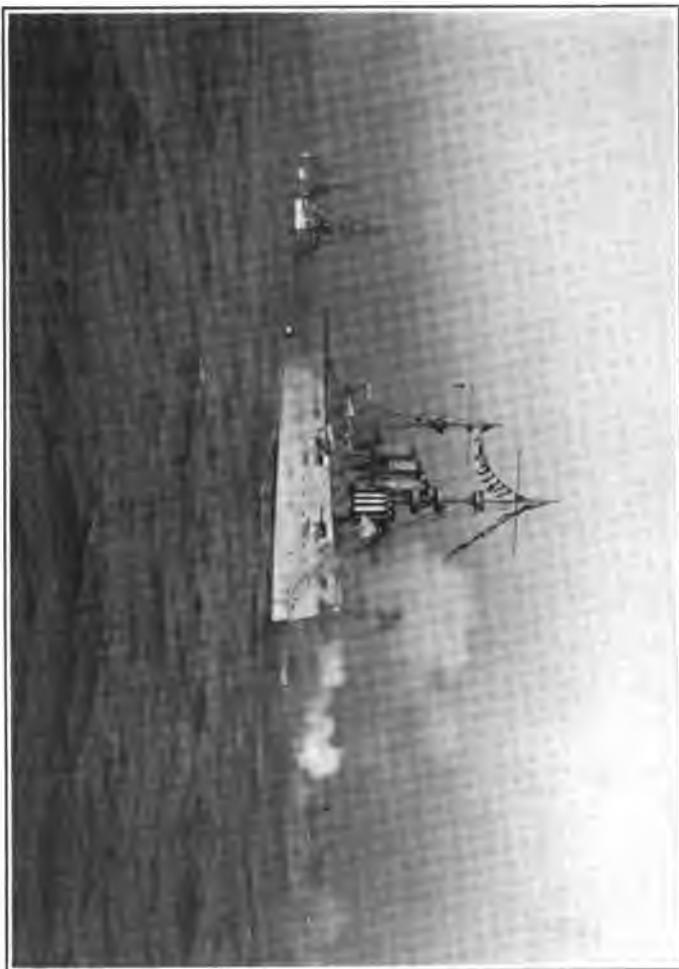
Clear, and consoling to my partial sight,  
My nation rises, ruling half the world ;  
Just in dominion, terrible in fight,  
Their flag triumphant wheresoe'er unfurled.

Let them cast out the vile and keep the best,  
Grow nobler as their wide horizon lifts,  
Their manly hearts to worthy toils addressed,—  
My children these shall be, and theirs my gifts!

---

*Such high course shall they hold or shall they yield  
To cowardice, foul fraud, corrupting ease?*

*How man will choose is even from gods concealed;  
Nor know we what his self-made Fate decrees.*



NEW STYLE.

Seeking mastery at sea by modern battleships.











